

and in the continuing conflicts from the Balkans to the Middle East, and thank God, in the peace agreement in Northern Ireland, and we hope there will be one between Israel and Syria soon, because they're coming to meet next week—people have to find a way not just to tolerate but to celebrate their differences, and to be secure in doing it because they believe, down to the core of their being, that what we have in common is even more important. We've got to let a lot of this stuff go. Our party can take the lead in doing that.

So go out there and talk to people about what's happened in this country in the last 7 years. Even more important, go out there and say, do you really believe in our lifetime we've ever been in this kind of shape before? And if you don't, what are we going to do with it? Go up to total strangers on the street and say, you're a citizen; what do you think we ought to do with this time? I think we ought to make the most of it.

And ask them about the aging of America. Ask them about the children of America. Ask them about their parents struggling to balance work and family. Ask them about the economy and the environment. Ask them about bringing economic opportunity to poor places. And ask them about building one America. You make this election season about that, and we'll have another celebration next year.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:10 a.m. in the Empire Room at the Wyndham Palace Resort. In his remarks, he referred to Charles A. Whitehead, chairman, Florida State Democratic Party; Senatorial candidate Bill Nelson and his wife, Grace; Rhea Chiles, widow of former Gov. Lawton Chiles of Florida; Jeffrey L. Eller, former Deputy Assistant to the President and Director of Media Affairs; Craig T. Smith, former Assistant to the President and Director of Political Affairs; Ward Connerly, chairman, California Civil Rights Initiative; Vinton G. Cerf, senior vice president of Internet architecture and technology, MCI WorldCom, and his wife, Sigrid; and Eric Lander, director, Whitehead Institute/MIT Center for Genome Research.

Statement on Turkey's European Union Candidacy

December 11, 1999

It is with great pleasure that I welcome the European Union's offer on Friday to Turkey—and Turkey's acceptance—of EU candidate status. The United States has long supported Turkey's bid to join the EU, in the belief that this would have lasting benefits not only for Turkey but also for all EU members and the United States. On Friday the EU and Turkey took a big step toward bringing that goal to fruition.

I would like to congratulate Turkish Prime Minister Ecevit for his government's decision to accept the EU offer. Under Mr. Ecevit, Turkey has launched an impressive array of political, economic, human rights, and other reforms that demonstrate conclusively its commitment to take its rightful place in Europe.

I would like to express my admiration to Greek Prime Minister Simitis for his statesmanship and groundbreaking efforts with Mr. Ecevit to improve relations between Greece and Turkey, efforts which were key to bringing about this momentous development.

Finally, I want to congratulate all the members of the European Union for their decision and to express my support for their vision of a Europe stronger and more united for its embrace of diversity. In particular, Finnish Prime Minister Lipponen deserves credit for his hard work and skill in helping to bring about this extraordinary achievement.

Remarks at a Reception for Representative Alcee Hastings in Fort Lauderdale, Florida

December 11, 1999

The President. Thank you very much. Whoa! You will have to forgive me, you can hear that I have a cold, and so I can't talk very loud. So if you talk, I can't talk. If you